

# VOLUNTARY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

for the volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York

Feb./March/April 2006 • Volume 6, Issue 1

## My HealthVet - Gateway to Veteran Health and Wellness

[www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)

No matter where you go, technology is changing the way we live our lives. We rely on technology for so many things - including health care. VA has developed My HealthVet - an Internet-based program designed especially for veterans and their families to help them achieve their best possible health.

Launched on Veterans Day 2003, My HealthVet provides "one-stop shopping" for information about VA benefits, services, and health information. A variety of self-check tools are available for a large number of conditions. Veteran patients will see the most benefit from using this

product; however, registration is open to everyone. The program is still in development and in the coming months new features will continue to be re-

leased. My HealthVet is a powerful tool that helps veterans better understand and manage their health, make informed choices, stay healthy and seek services when they are needed.

In August, veterans who receive their health care at VA were able to start refilling prescriptions online. Since then, more than 100,000 prescriptions have been refilled.

My HealthVet has been flourishing, said VA Secretary **James Nicholson**.

"VA's My HealthVet prescription refill service is proving to be extremely successful in providing America's veterans with fast, easy and secure access to their important medications," Nicholson said in a statement.

Nicholson said the service has become enormously popular, and the VA expects thousands of more veterans

to start taking advantage of it. When veterans order a prescription refill, the service routes the order to the VA's computer system. One of the VA's mail

pharmacies fills the order and mails it to the veteran, eliminating a trip to the drug store

In the future, registrants will be able to view appointments, copayment

balances, and key portions of their VA medical records online. Also in the works are features like secure doctor/patient messaging, moderated discussions on the web, and web-based training/education programs.

Each medical center across the Network has opened patient computer/education rooms to help support the My HealthVet initiative. If you are interested in promoting this program or assisting with staffing, training, etc. please contact the Voluntary Service for more information on where we could use your resources. And of course, you are welcome to register to use My HealthVet at: [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)



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### Web Site

[www.va.gov/visns/visn02/vet/volunteer.html](http://www.va.gov/visns/visn02/vet/volunteer.html)



The VAVS newsletter has been created for all volunteers and potential volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. This publication is meant to showcase the wonderful work all of our volunteers contribute to VA. Produced by Network 2 Communications Department. Printed by veterans in the Pre-Vocational Apprenticeship Program, Bath VAMC.



### We Want to Hear from You!

If you have any comments, questions, story ideas, etc. contact:

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## Thank You

I want to thank you and your volunteer organization in helping to raise more than \$1.5 million in cash and non cash donations last year. This represents a 48 percent increase above our 2004 donations. Through your generosity, this money helped support a wide variety of annual special events and patient care programs, as well as new initiatives. Your donations of television sets and bedspreads helped make our nursing home patients feel more at home. Supporting important patient care programs such as the Quit Smart program by purchasing coffee, sugar and cream to help patients enrolled kick the smoking habit and purchasing convertible bed/chairs for our Hospice/Palliative Care Program. These types of monetary and non monetary donations help improve the quality of life of our veteran patients.

This new year, as you and your organization begin to review the donations you made last year and consider what you are going to do this year, may I suggest that you meet with your local Voluntary Service Manager. He or she can be a tremendous resource in explaining the needs of their patients and assisting you in defining the type of donation you and your organization may want to consider giving - a monetary or non monetary donation - and where your gift might make the biggest difference in the lives of our veteran patients.

Voluntary Service staff is a good resource for you and your organization to learn more about the types of donations the veterans of today need. With our existing patient base getting older and new veterans coming back from the War in Iraq and conflict in Afghanistan, items like gift cards to Walmart, phone cards, as well as non monetary donations like laptop computers and sleep chairs for loved ones are very much in demand today and help our volunteer staff meet many patient needs all at once efficiently and effectively.

Again, I would like to compliment you and your volunteer organization for all your time and effort and excellent fundraising capabilities. I encourage you to call your local Voluntary Service Manager and discuss what and where your donation would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,

William F. Feeley  
Network Director



William F. Feeley  
Network Director





## VA Prescription Co-Pays Increase by \$1

Co-payments for outpatient medicines prescribed through Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities increased by \$1, effective January 1, 2006 for a 30-day supply of prescription drugs. This is the first change in VA prescription drug co-payments in four years.

"Through sound management practices, efficient pharmacy operations and price negotiations that put veterans first, VA has been able to contain prescription drug costs," said the Honorable **R. James Nicholson**, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, noting that co-payments paid by veterans will still be lower than similar expenses in the private sector.

The increase to \$8 from \$7 for a 30-day supply of prescription drugs is required by federal law, which bases VA's co-payments for outpatient prescriptions on increases in the Medical Consumer Price Index.

The \$1 increase does not affect veterans who have an injury or illness connected with their military service resulting in a 50 percent or greater disability. Also known as "Priority Group 1" veterans, these patients see no change in their current prescription drug benefit, Nicholson said.

Other veterans with less pronounced service-connected ailments - those classified as Priority Groups 2 through 6 - will see their prescription drug co-pays rise by \$1, but their annual out-of-pocket expenses for VA medicine remains capped. The new cap is now \$960 per year, up \$120 from the previous level. This means veterans in Priority Groups 2 through 6 will pay no more than \$960 annually for VA outpatient medicine.

Veterans who have no injury or illness related in any way to their prior military service - referred to as Priority Groups 7 and 8 - also see their co-payments increase, but there is no cap on annual payments for outpatient medicine.

Not all prescription drugs are subject to the \$1 increase. Outpatient medications not subject to co-payments include:

- Medication for treatment of a service-connected disability;
- Medication for a veteran who has a service-connected disability of 50 percent or more;
- Medication for a veteran disabled by 50 percent or more for unemployment;
- Medication for a veteran whose annual income does not exceed the amount of VA pensions;
- Medications for health problems that may be linked to Agent Orange for Vietnam veterans, to radiation exposure, to undiagnosed illnesses of Persian War veterans, or for new veterans within two years of discharge after serving in a combat theater.

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## Medicare Part D

Effective January 1, 2006 the new Medicare Prescription drug coverage (Medicare Part D) became available to everyone with Medicare Part A or B coverage. Veterans need to know how this new Medicare prescription drug coverage may affect them and their VA health care prescription benefits.

The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act

of 2003 (MMA) added a new prescription drug program to Medicare that provides insurance coverage for prescription drugs. These plans are offered by insurance companies and other private companies. Plans will cover both generic and brand-name prescription drugs. You can sign up for Medicare's new prescription drug coverage November 15, 2005 through May 15, 2006. The Medicare prescription drug coverage is wholly voluntary on the part of the participant.

Veterans enrolled in VA health care do not need to choose to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan, if they feel the VA program meets their needs. If veterans wish to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan at a later date, they will not be subject to the late enrollment penalty.

Veterans may choose to have **both** VA prescription coverage and Medicare prescription drug coverage. Please note that VA health care enrollment (which includes prescription coverage) and the Medicare prescription drug coverage are separate and distinct programs.

If you or another veteran need help choosing a Medicare prescription drug plan that meets your needs, you can do the following:

- visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) on the web and select "search tools" to get personalized information or the telephone number for your State Health Insurance Assistance Program
- call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)
- Speak with your local Veterans Service Center staff for additional guidance and resources available to veterans.





## Spotlight on *Albany*



### Thank You

Patients at the Stratton VA Medical Center are lucky to have wonderful volunteers who make the holiday season festive. Special events, visits, gift distributions, luncheons, parties, musical entertainment, and poinsettia plants bring holiday cheer throughout the facility. We are very grateful to all who participated in activities this year to brighten the holiday season for our patients.

American Legion VAVS representative, Al Demizio (left) serves Thanksgiving dinner to long term care patient, Bob Willey (right).

## CALENDAR CORNER

### February

#### 13-17 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week

Voluntary Service and Recreation/Music Therapy coordinate celebrations to honor veterans

#### 24 - Iwo Jima Flag Raising Re-enactment - 9:00 a.m.

Front Circle, Stratton VA Medical Center

Members of the Marine Corps League will re-enact the flag raising Ceremony and breakfast immediately following  
3rd Floor Auditorium

#### 26 - Four Chaplains Brotherhood Award Ceremony and Reception - 2:30 p.m.

11th Floor Chapel

Reception in the auditorium immediately following the ceremony  
Sponsored by the Jewish War Veterans Post 105

### April

#### 7 - POW Recognition Day Ceremony - 11:00 a.m.

Auditorium

#### 23-29 - National Volunteer Week

#### 23 - Volunteer Recognition Ceremony and Dinner - 1:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn, Wolf Road, Colonie

Invitations will be mailed in early April

## Get2Know Program

The Office of Information's Get2Know Program is a national initiative designed for VA employees to better understand who they serve and re-energize a sense of mission. Since most VA staff work at their computers in an office setting, the program provides employees with an opportunity to interact with veterans to have a better understanding of their needs.

Voluntary Service staff met with their Administrative Officer to discuss the project and develop a number of volunteer opportunities. Four orientation sessions for employees were held. Not only did employees learn about Get2Know but they also received an overview of the many programs Voluntary Service has. Fifty employees signed up as volunteers. Although the project only stipulates two volunteer episodes, we are encouraging all of the employees who enjoyed this opportunity to continue on as volunteers after the project is over.

## Volunteer Opportunities

- ☎ Snack & Chat Cart: provide a friendly visit and bring nourishment to hospitalized veterans
- ☎ Laboratory (weekday evenings, weekend and holiday afternoons): Answer phones, run specimens to lab areas
- ☎ Good Neighbor Program (Albany, Colonie, Delmar, Loudonville, Schenectady and Voorheesville): visit homebound veterans for 1-2 hours each week to provide the caregiver a much needed break
- ☎ Volunteer Drivers (weekday and on-call)
- ☎ Office/Clerical

Spotlight on Albany continued on page 11







## Spotlight on Bath

### Shifting the Focus

The focus of patient recreation is changing at the Bath VA. Most of the changes are due to the advancing age of our nursing home patients, their inability to travel, and a greater emphasis on self-directed programs for the younger domiciliary population.

Through patient assessment surveys, staff have identified a need for more on-station events. These types of programs help us treat and maintain the physical, mental and emotional well-being of all of our veterans. We encourage organizations to sponsor programs at the facility so our patients are able to participate without limiting the numbers due to transportation, age, or physical limitations.









We would like to provide activities such as: sports, games, dance, drama, arts and crafts, one-on-one visitations, music, picnics and limited field trips so all of our veterans can build confidence, socialize, and remediate the effects of illness or disability.

Many of our Lodges, Posts and Units have sponsored off-station dinners and events for over 30 years. We realize this transition may not be easy - but together we can keep the focus on what is best for our veterans. Your ideas are encouraged and welcomed. Please feel free to contact us: **Sue DeSalvo** (607) 664-4773; **Sis Conrad** (607) 664-4772; **Linda Pickering**, Recreation (607) 664-4454

### Wish List

- ☐ Items for hospice/palliative care cart (chapstick, socks, relaxation tapes, juice boxes, snacks, etc.)
- ☐ Adult Bicycles and Helmets
- ☐ Health and Comfort Items (razors, toothpaste, toothbrushes)
- ☐ Lab Robes and Afghans
- ☐ Phone Cards
- ☐ Canteen Books
- ☐ Items for the Birthday Program (stationary and stamps)
- ☐ Playing Cards
- ☐ Board Games
- ☐ Socks (white and non-skid)
- ☐ New Electric Shavers
- ☐ New or Like New Household Items for Jump Start Program (electric mixers, toasters, pots, pans, bowls, cups, dishware, toasters, shower curtains, silverware, sheets, blankets, canisters, duffle bags, suitcases and grocery gift cards)
- ☐ Monetary Donations for: Nursing Home Wander Garden (contact Voluntary Service for details), Clothing Program, Holiday Events, Super Bowl Parties, Women Veteran Programs, Mini Stand Down Events, Recreational Programs (summer picnics, ice cream trips, Annual Keuka Maid Boat Trip, National Golden Age Games)

### Volunteer Assignments

-  Satisfaction Surveys
-  \*Drivers (Bath/Elmira/Wellsville)
-  Birthday Program
-  Nursing Home (escorts, small group arts and crafts, one-on-one visitations, feeding assistance and off station trips)
-  Women Veteran Mentoring Program
-  \*\* Community Visiting/Respite Program
-  Clerical
-  Information Desk
-  Computer Lab/Patient Library
-  Veterans History Project (documenting personal military stories for submission to the Library of Congress)
- \*Requires unrestricted license, passing a physical examination and DMV background check
- \*\* Subject to reference and special background check



### Volunteers Receive Hospice/Palliative Care Certification

The Bath VA teamed up with Southern Tier Hospice and Palliative Care to provide training for our volunteers. VA volunteers attended a five day accredited training program to receive certification. Without volunteers, most hospice/palliative care programs would not be able to carry out their mission, including those within VA. Volunteers not only provide valuable services, but provide companionship, friendship, and support to patients and their caregivers. A heartfelt thank you to **Jay and Cathy Bodine, Shirley Clarke, Esther Covell, Linda Wise**, and Voluntary Service Specialist **Sis Conrad**.

Spotlight on Bath continued on page 11





## Spotlight on *Canandaigua*

### Quilts of Valor

Several months ago, Voluntary Service was contacted about participating in the Quilts of Valor (QOV) program that provides quilts created for combat wounded soldiers to provide warmth and comfort while they recover from their injuries. Canandaigua jumped at the chance to give our veterans something special and requested 75 quilts. We have received the most beautiful quilts from quilters all over the United States and have already given several to our veterans in Rochester and Canandaigua.

QOV was started by **Catherine Roberts** of Seaford, Delaware in 2003. Catherine, a Blue Star mom (a mom who has a son or daughter in the military) realized that her vision of the world changed when she had a child in harm's way. She knew she wanted to do something to make a difference. Catherine did an Internet search but found nothing. She made phone calls around the country trying to find out how she could start a project like this and ended up talking to Chaplain Kallerson at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Chaplain Kallerson's wife was a quilter and he understood what Catherine wanted to do. Catherine now has contacts at military hospitals and with various veteran groups around the country. For complete information about QOV, visit their Web site at: [www.quiltsforsoldiers.com](http://www.quiltsforsoldiers.com).

### Veterans Day

To help our veterans celebrate their special day, we provided each Ward with cake, punch, mementos, and door prizes to show our veterans how much we appreciate their sacrifice.

Our Annual Female Veterans Day Tea was also held in November. Cake and punch were provided to our female veterans who enjoyed their annual get together to meet other female veterans.

### CALENDAR CORNER

#### February

- 8 - VAVS Committee - 1:00 p.m.  
Bldg. 5, Auditorium
- 9 - Decorating Day (in preparation for National Salute Week) - 9:30 a.m.  
Bldg. 5, Auditorium
- 12-18 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week  
A variety of activities scheduled throughout the week
- \*12 - Valentine Senior Prom (includes 10-piece big band) - 1:00 p.m.  
Bldg. 5, Auditorium  
Sponsored by St. John's Church Boy Scout Troop # 32
- 14 - Valentine Distribution/Ward Visitation - 10:00 a.m.  
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

#### March

- \*12 - Celtic Dance Show - 5:00 p.m.  
Bldg. 5, Auditorium  
Sponsored by the Canandaigua School of Dance

#### April

- 6 - Pie, Plant and Ice Cream Sale - 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
Bldg. 5, Auditorium  
Please bring your garage sale items, plants and baked goods
- 21 - Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet - 11:30 a.m.  
Burgundy Basin Inn
- 23-29 - National Volunteer Week  
Daily refreshments in the Volunteer Lounge and ROPC  
Activities planned during volunteer week in various settings

\*Escorts are needed to take patients to the auditorium for these programs. Remember without YOUR assistance, many of the patients may not be able to participate.













## Spotlight on Canandaigua (continued)

### Wish List

- ☐ Coffee (regular and decaf)
- ☐ Creamer
- ☐ Sugar/Sweet and Low
- ☐ Bowling/Movie Tickets
- ☐ Baking Items/English Muffins/  
Peanut Butter
- ☐ CDs (Frank Sinatra, Tony  
Bennett, etc.)
- ☐ Gift Cards (Walmart and  
Wegmans)
- ☐ Soft, Sugar Free Candy
- ☐ Toiletries
- ☐ Prepaid Phone Cards
- ☐ New Socks/Underwear
- ☐ Paper Products/Plastic Silverware
- ☐ 39¢ Postage Stamps

### Volunteer Opportunities

-  Drivers
-  Home Based Primary Care  
(Rochester)
-  Companions
-  Performance Groups
-  Laundry Assistance
-  Escorts for Church Services
-  Wood Shop (Rochester)
-  Clerical

### Computer Lab

The Canandaigua VA Medical Center computer lab is located in the basement of 8 Bldg. There are six computers with printers, as well as volunteers who staff the room five days per week. Veteran patients have the opportunity to learn basic computer skills as well as accessing My HealtheVet.

The computer lab is also involved in another new initiative - providing an opportunity for veterans to receive e-mails. Volunteers will print e-mails received through the computer lab and then pass the printed e-mail to the appropriate patient. To e-mail a veteran patient residing at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center, send the message to: [vacanapatient@rochester.rr.com](mailto:vacanapatient@rochester.rr.com). Be sure to include the patient's name and ward (9A, 33A, 7B, etc.) in the subject line of your message. Questions can be directed to **Bob Corrado**, Acting IS Operations Manager at (585) 393-8260.

## Spotlight on Syracuse (continued)

### A Year in Review

Fiscal Year 2005 saw some good news for Syracuse's VAVS program. Our donations, number of volunteers, and volunteer hours all increased. Our donations have climbed over the last three years with a \$43,652 increase in value last year. Our student volunteer population had a 33% increase and the total of regularly scheduled volunteers topped out at 890 - an increase of 109 volunteers. Total hours of volunteerism, increased by 15,062 for a total of 88,757 hours. Some significant examples of our volunteerism include:

- **Manpower** - We have supported My HealtheVet by organizing the computer room and helping with the roll out of the project by signing up vets, producing information material, and holding lunch and learn programs.
- **Donated goods and services** - We continue to receive vans for our Disabled American Veteran (DAV) Transportation Network program with the help of several service organizations and individual supporters.
- **Monetary donations** - Through the generous donations from our service organizations, we are able to purchase newspapers and haircuts for our veterans.



### Holiday Cheer

With the holidays behind us, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our volunteers, community friends and businesses for their generous donations throughout the holiday season. Because of your generosity, Voluntary Service was able to provide gifts for 800 veterans valued at \$18,000. Christmas gifts consisted of comfort kits, knit hats, socks, puzzle books, calendars, and a hooded, zippered sweatshirt bearing the logo and sentiment "Freedom is Not Free." Many volunteers were on hand to help distribute gifts while joining in a round of "Jingle Bells" on each Ward.





## Spotlight on *Syracuse*

### New Recognition Celebration!

The Voluntary Service Program Recognition Celebration is an opportunity for our Medical Center to acknowledge the extraordinary work and efforts of all our volunteers, service organizations, corporate partners, individual donors, and community stakeholders.

Over the past several years the event was held in April during National Volunteer Recognition Month. Because our fiscal year ends on the last day of September and our new year begins on the first day of October, the hours of service awards had a lag of several months between the end of the fiscal year and the recognition event. In order to create an event that honors our volunteers in a timely manner, we have moved the program to the fall.

This year's program, "The Impact of VA Voluntary Service," was held in December at the Medical Center and included displays, photos, videos and an awards table. A small token of our appreciation was provided to our volunteers. Thank you!



### Stained Glass Window Dedicated

The students of West Genesee High School, artist, **Jerome Durr** and teacher, **Jennifer Schrader** worked for more than one year researching, designing and installing a stained glass window in the foyer of our newly renovated entranceway. We thank all of the student volunteers who worked on this wonderful gift.

"Before starting the veteran hospital's stained glass window, I knew very little about veterans and their impact on society. To be able to meet and work with veterans was a blessing. Interactions with the community helped me to realize the importance in remembering the hard work and dedication veterans give in serving our country. It was only through this interaction that we could truly express our appreciation into the images and forms of the stained glass window. The piece is meant to show a heroic tone and to show veterans that we truly thank them. The project has taken a year to complete. All of the time and effort spent working to design and fabricate this project helped us to create a piece of art that comes straight from our hearts."

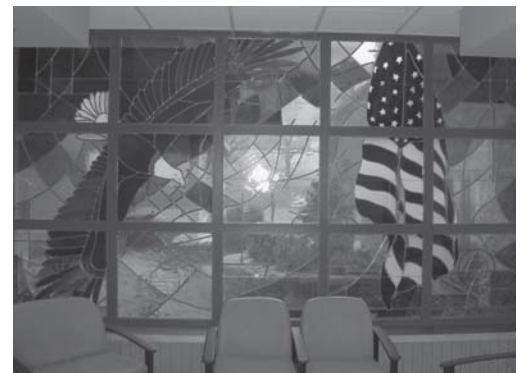
*Kate Vanderpool, West Genesee graduate and currently a freshman majoring in visual art at Syracuse University*

"I was eager to participate in the grant project with Mrs. Schrader's art students from West Genesee High School. I have gotten the opportunity to share my artistic knowledge with the students and to watch them grow as artists. Helping the students to go through the process of designing and constructing a piece of this scale has been a very fulfilling experience. Having served in the U.S. Army as a Green Beret in the Vietnam War, I found myself fortunate to participate in a project that encompassed two things that are of such importance to me. The piece will be there for many years to honor and show our appreciation to veterans..."

*Jerome R. Durr, artist*

"As an art educator, I feel that I have the opportunity to empower young adults to become tomorrow's leaders. My approach is not to simply pass on information about art and culture but to give each student the chance to take an active role within their culture. I have found that the visual arts can become the catalyst for students to become personally involved in their community."

*Jennifer Schrader, art teacher, West Genesee High School*



Spotlight on Syracuse continued on page 7







## Spotlight on Western NY



WNY Chinese Auction

### Fundraiser Success

The VAVS Committee at Batavia hosted its 4th Annual Chinese Auction in October, raising \$2,833.

Committee members canvassed their Posts, Chapters, families, friends, and local businesses for donated items. VA staff and volunteers also got involved by selling tickets, attending the event and donating several items. Proceeds from the event will help offset future veteran related activities.

### CALENDAR CORNER

#### February

5 - Masonic Service Associations - 4 Chaplains Service - 1:00 p.m.  
Buffalo - Room 301

8 - Blood Drive - 8:30 a.m.  
Buffalo - Room 301

10, 17, 24 - Black History Month Celebrations  
Buffalo - Room 301

14 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans - 1:00 p.m.  
Batavia - Recreation Hall  
Buffalo - Room 301

22 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:30 p.m.  
Batavia - Building 4, Auditorium

#### March

15 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:30 p.m.  
Buffalo - Room 301

16 - Veterans Service Officer Meeting - 9:30 a.m.  
Batavia - Building 4, Auditorium

#### April

9 - National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day - 1:00 p.m.  
Buffalo - Room 301

23-29 - National Volunteer Week - Volunteer Appreciation  
Batavia and Buffalo - daily refreshments and gift distribution

### Volunteer Opportunities

- ☛ Clerical - Buffalo
- ☛ Computer Assistant: help residents with computer skills - Batavia
- ☛ Drivers: DAV Volunteer Transportation Program - Buffalo and Batavia and Guest Parking Lot Shuttle - Buffalo
- ☛ Drink Cart: serve beverages to residents in their rooms - Batavia
- ☛ Greeters: welcome veterans and visitors, help them get to appointments and other related areas - Buffalo
- ☛ Patient/Ward Visitation(s): assist staff with patient care activities as well as visiting and interacting with staff/veterans as needed- Buffalo
- ☛ Patient Escort/Transport Service: assist veterans to and from appointments, etc. - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☛ Pharmacy Service: clerical duties, as well as transporting various items throughout facility - Buffalo
- ☛ Recreational Aide: assist with/organize activities with patients - Batavia and Buffalo

Spotlight on WNY continued on page 10





## Spotlight on WNY (continued)

### Holiday Season

The holiday season at VA Western New York Healthcare System (VAWNYHS) was a busy one again this year. All of our facilities were decorated to celebrate a festive holiday season.

The 5th Annual Employee Committee Thanksgiving Dinner was held Sunday, November 20. The food court area of the Medical Center welcomed nearly 140 homeless/needed veterans and their families.

Approximately 40 staff members and their families served the Thanksgiving Dinner with all the trimmings. Decorations and entertainment were provided by children of VA staff and other area school children.

Other holiday events included some traditional programs in Batavia, such as: Order of the Eastern Stars Plant Distribution, American Legion 8th District's Wreath Hanging Ceremony and Auxiliary Gift Shop, as well as the VAVS Committee's Annual Christmas Day gift bag and morning "walk - thru." Recreation Therapy treated residents and family members to "Ron and Nancy's" traditional holiday variety show.

In Buffalo, the United Auto Workers hosted "Monte Carlo" Night and the Amherst Garden Club held a wreath distribution. The American Legion 8th District hosted a Wreath Hanging Ceremony and Auxiliary Gift Shop and like Batavia, patients were given gift bags Christmas morning. New this season was the "Welcome Home" Holiday Party for returning troops and their family members.

A special thank you to everyone who helped make the holiday season enjoyable for our veterans and their families.



Veterans enjoy Thanksgiving Dinner at VAWNYHS.



### Wish List

- ☐ Funding for:
  - Travel (for patients in need) - Buffalo
  - Patient activities - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ Stair climber - Batavia
- ☐ Art therapy supplies - Buffalo
- ☐ Room furnishings - Batavia
- ☐ Treadmill(s) - Buffalo
- ☐ DAV/Volunteer Transportation Program - Batavia and Buffalo\*
- ☐ Coffee Cart Program - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ 9" color televisions - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ Comping coupons - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ Welcome kits, comfort items, newspapers - Buffalo

\*Note: all donations must go directly to DAV Department of NY

### Employees Helping Veterans

AMVETS Post #72 was recently recognized by Associate Director, **Timothy Liezert** for their contributions to our veterans. Over the last few years Buffalo employees: **Jim Mulderig**, **Greg Szarpa** and **Donal Day** have been instrumental in getting members excited about serving their fellow veterans.

The majority of their new Post members are VA employees. Not only is membership up and more active, AMVETS Post #72 is getting the job done. In the past 18 months, this organization has contributed \$7,540 in assistance for parties, recreation trips, Veterans Day plant distributions, emergency travel, homeless and women veterans programs, and various other patient needs at both of our facilities. Thank you and kudos to AMVETS Post #72!



AMVETS Post #72 with Associate Director Timothy Liezert.



## Spotlight on Bath (continued)

# Computer Lab Grand Re-Opening

The Veteran Computer Lab celebrated its grand re-opening on October 31 after a week closure. The new location (Bldg. 101, Section 1) provides easier access for both inpatients and outpatients. This move has also enabled us to place six additional computers dedicated to My Health@Vet. Volunteers provide coverage Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and provide assistance in basic computer literacy, Internet resources, and discharge planning.



## Making a Difference

Did you know that many veterans are unaware of their VA benefits? Many are without health care coverage, have had a change in their income, have recently become unemployed, or just returned from active duty service. Did you know that volunteers have the power to help VA promote health care to these veterans?

Volunteers play an important role in advocating for veterans. You have the influence to broaden the base of advocacy support for veterans through your strong community ties and through your dedication to serving those that served. You have the perfect opportunity to discuss the positive benefits of VA health care. Seize the moment to discuss VA health care with family, neighbors, co-workers, and friends. Share your “volunteering for a veteran” experiences with them.

If your organization is interested in hosting an outreach event, booking a speaker for a specific health care topic, or would like additional information about VA health care benefits contact **Sue DeSalvo** at (607) 664-4773.



## Spotlight on Albany (continued)

## Wish List

- ☐ Canteen Books (for haircuts)
- ☐ CDTA Bus Tokens
- ☐ Cans of Decaf Coffee
- ☐ Sneakers (men's - all sizes, new only)
- ☐ Winter Gloves
- ☐ Sweatpants (sizes medium and large)
- ☐ Denture Adhesive
- ☐ Deodorant (small size)
- ☐ Funds for:
  - Replacement vans for Transportation Program
  - Sending patients to the National Rehabilitation Games and the Creative Arts Festival
  - Maintaining fish tanks
  - Patient bowling program

## Network 2 Volunteer Staff

Albany

**Karen Haas, Manager**  
(518) 626-5506

**Stephanie Bonenfant, Specialist**  
(518) 626-5508

## Bath

**Susan DeSalvo, Manager**  
(607) 664-4773

**Sis Conrad, Specialist**  
(607) 664-4772

**Richard Conklin, Clerk**  
(607) 664-4771

## Canandaigua

**Robin Johnson, Manager**  
(585) 393-7759

**Patti Ciancaglini, Specialist**  
(585) 393-7761

## Syracuse

**Bob Hawes, Manager**  
(315) 425-4681

**Kathy Marsh, Assistant**  
(315) 425-4315

### Western New York (Buffalo and Batavia)

**Mark Francis, Manager**  
(716) 862-8667

**Cheryl Boyd, Specialist**  
(716) 862-8672

**Kathleen Martin, Specialist**  
(585) 344-3330

**Kelly Clark, Intern** (716) 862-8671



VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York  
Network 2 Communications  
465 Westfall Road  
Rochester, New York 14620

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## Reaching Us Is Easy

### VA Medical Centers:

#### Albany

113 Holland Avenue  
Albany, NY 12208  
(518) 626-5000

#### Batavia

222 Richmond Avenue  
Batavia, NY 14020  
(585) 297-1000

#### Bath

76 Veterans Avenue  
Bath, NY 14810  
(607) 664-4000

#### Buffalo

3495 Bailey Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14215  
(716) 834-9200

#### Canandaigua

400 Fort Hill Avenue  
Canandaigua, NY 14424  
(585) 394-2000  
(800) 204-9917

#### Syracuse

800 Irving Avenue  
Syracuse, NY 13210  
(315) 425-4400

### Community-Based Outpatient Clinics:

#### Auburn

Auburn Memorial Hospital  
17 Lansing St.  
Auburn, NY 13021  
(315) 255-7002

#### Bainbridge

109 North Main Street  
Bainbridge, NY 13733  
(607) 967-8590

#### Binghamton

425 Robinson Street  
Binghamton, NY 13001  
(607) 772-9100

#### Carthage

3 Bridge Street  
Carthage, NY 13619  
(315) 493-4180

#### Catskill

Greene Medical Bldg.  
159 Jefferson Heights  
Catskill, NY 12414  
(518) 943-7515

#### Clifton Park

1673 Route 9  
Clifton Park, NY 12065  
(518) 383-8506

#### Cortland

1129 Commons Avenue  
Cortland, NY 13045  
(607) 662-1517

#### Dunkirk

The Resource Center  
325 Central Avenue  
Dunkirk, NY 14048  
(716) 366-2122

#### Elizabethtown

P.O. Box 277, Park St.  
Elizabethtown, NY 12932  
(518) 873-3295

#### Elmira

Health Services Bldg.  
200 Madison Ave.  
Suite 2E  
Elmira, NY 14901  
(877) 845-3247

#### Fonda

Camp Mohawk Plaza  
Rt. 30A  
Fonda, NY 12068  
(518) 853-1247

#### Glens Falls

84 Broad Street  
Glens Falls, NY 12801  
(518) 798-6066

#### Ithaca

10 Arrowwood Drive  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
(607) 274-4680

#### Jamestown

The Resource Center  
890 East Second Street  
Jamestown, NY 14701  
(716) 661-1447

#### Kingston

63 Hurley Avenue  
Kingston, NY 12401  
(845) 331-8322

#### Lackawanna

Our Lady of Victory  
Family Care Center  
227 Ridge Road  
Lackawanna, NY 14218  
(716) 822-5944

#### Lockport

Ambulatory Care Center  
5875 S. Transit Road  
Lockport, NY 14094  
(716) 433-2025

#### Malone

183 Park Street, Suite 3  
Malone, NY 12953  
(518) 481-2545

#### Massena

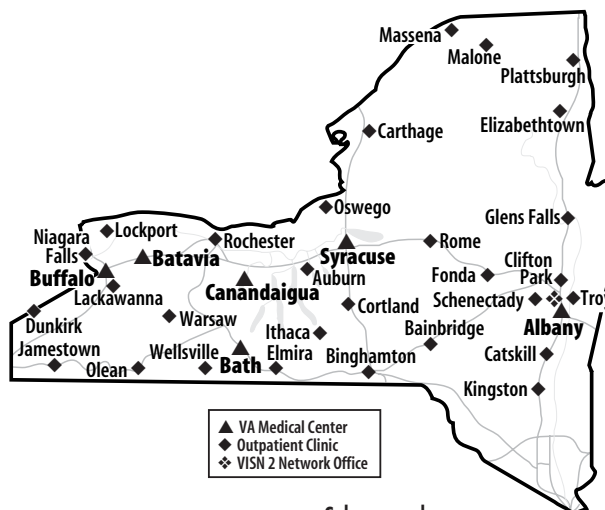
1 Hospital Drive  
Massena, NY 13662  
(315) 769-4253

#### Niagara Falls

2201 Pine Avenue  
Niagara Falls, NY 14301  
1-(800) 223-4810

#### Olean

465 North Union Street  
Olean, NY 14760  
(716) 373-7709



#### Oswego

Seneca Hills Health  
Services Center  
County Route 45A  
Oswego, NY 13126  
(315) 343-0925

#### Plattsburgh

43 Durkee Street  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901  
(518) 561-8310

#### Rochester

465 Westfall Road  
Rochester, NY 14620  
(585) 463-2600

#### Rome

125 Brookley Road  
Bldg. 510  
Rome, NY 13441  
(315) 334-7100

#### Schenectady

1322 Gerling St. Sheridan Plaza  
Schenectady, NY 12308  
(518) 346-3334

#### Troy

295 River Street  
Troy, NY 12180  
(518) 274-7707

#### Warsaw

Wyoming County  
Community Hospital  
400 N. Main Street  
Warsaw, NY 14569  
(585) 344-3355

#### Wellsville

Jones Memorial Hospital Health  
Care Center  
13 Loder Street  
Wellsville, NY 14895  
(585) 596-2056

**VA Health Care On The Web**  
[www.va.gov/visns/visn02](http://www.va.gov/visns/visn02)

**For Reliable Health Information On The Web**  
[www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)

**Veterans Service Contact Center**  
**1-888-823-9656**

For information on eligibility, VA health care, benefits,  
enrollment or questions on your billing statement